

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEL AV 06014 131143Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----022994 131148Z /10
O 131058Z AUG 77 ZFF-4
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO USDEL SECRETARY
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7746

S E C R E T TEL AVIV 6014

EXDIS

FOR HABIB, ATHERTON AND CARTER FROM LEWIS

DEPARTMENT PASS WHITE HOUSE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: IS, US, OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS)
SUBJECT: PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF THE OUTCOME OF THE SECRETARY'S
MIDDLE EAST TRIP

1. WE ARE NOW BEGINING TO SEE THAT THE LINE BEING
TAKEN BY THE AMERICAN PRESS ON THE TRIP'S OUTCOME IS
A VERY PESSIMISTIC LINE INDEED. I HOPE YOU WILL THINK
CAREFULLY ABOUT HOW WHATEVER IS SAID TO AND THROUGH
OUR PRESS IN THE NEXT TWO OR THREE DAYS MAY IMPACT
HERE ON THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS.

2. BEGIN HAS NOW BEEN REQUIRED BY THE OPPOSITION OT
DEBATE MONDAY AFTERNOON IN A SPECIAL SESSION OF THE
KNESSET THE OPPOSITION CHARGES THAT THE VANCE VISIT
PROVES HIS FOREIGN POLICY IS A FAILURE. HE WILL
EASILY BE ABLE TO TURN BACK ANY CONFIDENCE VOTES, AND
I SUSPECT THAT HIS PARLIAMENTARY SKILLS WILL RATHER
READILY OUTSTRIP THOSE OF PERES, ALLON, RABIN AND
COMPANY IN THIS INSTANCE. BUT HE AND DAYAN ARE
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FOLLOWING A RELENTLESSLY OPTIMISITC LINE IN PUBLIC
WHICH CONTRASTS SO SHARPLY WITH THE PRESS CONCLUSIONS
HERE AND IN THE U.S. THAT HE WILL BE SOMEWHAT VULNER-
ALBE.

3. THIS MAY PRODUCE SOME MARGINALLY USEFUL POLITICAL
PRESSURES ON THE BEGIN GOVERNMENT TO BE MORE FLEXIBLE

IN THE NEXT PHASES OF THE DISCUSSIONS, EVEN THOUGH I DO NOT EXPECT THAT PRESSURE TO CHANGE BEGIN'S BASIC APPROACH. STILL IT IS SOMETHING, AND WE SHOULD DO NOTHING WHICH WOULD INHIBIT THAT PRESSURE'S DEVELOPING NATURALLY FROM THE INTERNAL POLITICAL DYNAMICS HERE. IF THE ISRAELIS ARE PUBLICLY IDENTIFIED IN THE AMERICAN AND ISRAELI PRESS AS "INTRANSIGENT," "STUBBORN," AND "INFLEXIBLE" IN STORIES WHICH ARE CLEARLY SOURCED TO STATEMENTS BY AMERICAN OFFICIALS EITHER ON THE RECORD OR ON BACKGROUND, BEGIN WILL BE THE WINNER RATHER THAN THE LOSER. THE KIND OF STORY WHICH ALLEGES ARAB MODERATION AND FLEXIBILITY AND BLAMES THE ISRAELIS FOR STALEMATE IS READYMADE TO GIVE BEGIN THE HANDLE HE NEEDS TO UNITE MUCH OF THE KNESSET BEHIND HIS APPROACH.

4. FOR THIS REASON, I URGE THAT ALL CONCERNED TRY TO STICK AS CLOSELY AS POSSIBLE TO THE APPROACH TAKEN BY THE SECRETARY IN HIS FINAL PRESS CONFERENCE HERE. WE DO NOT SUGGEST GILDING ANY LILIES. BUT ASSIGNING BLAME FOR STALEMATE IN CONVERSATIONS WITH NEWSMEN AT THIS JUNCTURE IS A SURE FORMULA FOR PERPETUATING IT. LEWIS

NOTE BY OC/T: TEL AVIA 6014 NOT PASSED, WHITE HOUSE.

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 13-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
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